



MDL MARINAS

**News Release
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**Ocean Globe Race pre-start festivities kick off next week,
29 August – 10 September 2023**

With the race yachts and competing crews arriving daily, all's now set for the Ocean Globe Race (OGR) pre-start festivities which will kick off next week in the Race Village at MDL's Ocean Village Marina in Southampton. And there's something for everyone – sailor or non-sailor, old and young, celebrating all things nautical.

First up is the official opening of the Race Village by the Lord Mayor of Southampton on Tuesday 29 August at 11am, with race crews, press and public all invited to cheer on as the ribbon is cut.

Shared stories, talks and workshops

As the crews make their final preparations, visitors to the Race Village will be able to share in the adventure of ocean sailing as writer and broadcaster, Paul Heiney, entertains with his tales of sailing the Atlantic single-handed on Saturday 2nd September at 1pm. His message is: "If I can do it, so can you."

Using the same techniques as the competitors in the Ocean Globe Race will be, visitors can learn the art of navigating using just the sun, moon and stars to guide their way. Nigel Rennie from First Class Sailing will be demonstrating how to use a sextant, the navigation tool used by sailors for centuries, in a series of Celestial Navigation workshops at 2pm on 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 6th September.

As it approaches its bicentenary next year, volunteers from the Royal National Lifeboat Institution's (RNLI) Water Safety Education Team will be in the Race Village on the 29th August, 2nd, 3rd, 9th and 10th September promoting its 'Float to Live' campaign conducting lifejacket checks and highlighting all the different technologies available to call for help.

Inspiring future volunteers and offering a little friendly competition, younger visitors to the Race Village can take part in the 'Ready, Steady, Crew' game to kit up like RNLI crew as



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quickly as possible, with the child who kits up the quickest being crowned the winner and receiving a fabulous prize from the RNLI shop.

As *Maiden* prepares to take on the Ocean Globe Race, a team from The Maiden Factor Foundation will be in the Race Village to highlight the foundation's mission and let people know how they can get involved.

Founded by Whitbread veteran Tracy Edwards, the charity works with, fundraises for, and supports communities to enable girls into education, helping them to reach their full potential and create better futures for all.

Race Village sponsor, e-Propulsion will be showcasing a selection of its innovative electric outboards, pod drives and battery solutions. Team members will also be on hand to discuss its sustainable solutions to make boating greener.

For the next generation of sailors

The team from Southampton's SeaCity Museum will be hosting some free and fun pirate activities. Children will have the chance to design their own treasure map and pirate hat as well as handle some fascinating artefacts, including a real cannon ball, on the 31st August, 1st, 3rd and 9th September from 1pm to 4pm.

Continuing the swash-buckling theme, Pirates and Pixies Faces & Parties will be offering nautically inspired face painting from dolphins and turtles to legendary pirates and mythical mermaids. Available on the 31st August, 1st, 3rd and 9th September for a small fee from 1pm to 4pm.

Scientists from the National Oceanography Centre, the UK's leading ocean science and research charity, will be at the Race Village on the 31st August and 7th September to introduce visitors to the fascinating microscopic world that lives in our ocean and discuss how tiny organisms like plankton play a big role in planetary health.

There'll be the opportunity to look through microscopes and see first-hand the breath of ocean biodiversity, as well as and find out about the interrelated nature of the marine food chain.



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Charity days

With the state of our seas such an important topic on everyone's agenda, environmental charity Blue Marine Foundation will be in the Race Village on Thursday 31st August to raise awareness of the issues affecting our oceans and deliver initiatives to help protect them for future generations.

From 1pm-1.30pm, Dr Luke Helmer will be presenting the Blue Marine Foundation's Solent Seascape Project, which is designed to bring people together to put nature back together. The Solent is a playground for many water users, and this project is aiming to reverse the decline of nature in the area and restore it.

Tackling the decline of young people participating in boating, sailing charity Ocean Youth Trust (South) helps to provide 'adventure under sail' to young people who have shown exceptional accomplishments and qualities which have inspired or supported others.

A team from the charity will be in the Race Village on 2nd September. Visitors can take part in origami boat building - a fun activity that the young crew often do while out at sea - and find out more about the great work it does with young people aged 11-25.

Maritime art

Winner of the Royal Society of Marine Artists' New Generation Award, Gregory Smith will be displaying and selling his exquisite oil paintings depicting images of sea going craft, historical and contemporary, including the Ocean Globe Race competitors captured as they arrive and berth at Ocean Village.

In his fourth year of exhibiting with the Royal Society, Gregory will also be accepting commissions, whether you'd like a Turneresque galleon for your walls or something more personal.

Daily screenings

On the Race Village's jumbotron (massive display screen), there will be screenings of sailing films and documentaries, including footage of previous Whitbread Round the World Races and Tracy Edwards' movie *Maiden* (3rd September 3pm) - the story of a 24-year-old cook on



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charter boats becoming the skipper of the first ever all-female crew to enter the Whitbread Round the World Race in 1989.

In addition, the OGR WebTV daily crew interviews will be shown throughout, giving visitors the opportunity to learn more about the teams and individuals taking part in this epic, ocean-going adventure.

Take a tour

Visitors to the Race Village can take a tour of the pontoons and get up close to the international fleet of the 47-68ft yachts as they make their final preparations for the 27,000 nautical mile challenge ahead.

Tours will take place every day from 29th August between 1pm and 5pm and can be booked via Eventbrite in advance or on the day (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ocean-globe-race-2023-pontoon-access-tickets-700811284417>). Visitors taking a tour will have the option to make a small charitable donation prior to the tour which will go to support the Blue Marine Foundation, Ocean Youth Trust (South) and The Maiden Factor Foundation.

Rest, refuel and relax

With music enhancing the festival atmosphere, visitors can enjoy traditional Thai street food from Mama's Kitchen, delicious hot drinks from Crofty's Coffee Bar, artisan pizza from Arty Stan and indulge from the Renegade Brewery's range of exquisite beers. There will also be an on-site bar run by the team behind the Ketch Rigger and Gaff Rigger restaurants on the River Hamble.

Race start

Tickets to watch the start and say bon voyage to the 14 Ocean Globe Race crews onboard the historic steamship Shieldhall have now sold out, but you could still win a pair of tickets at the Captains' Dinner Charity auction, taking place on 1st September.

The winning bidder will join friends and family of the crews onboard for a late breakfast at 11.00, before watching the Ocean Globe Race fleet cross the line as Sir Chay Blyth starts the race from the famous Royal Yacht Squadron.



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However, no one need miss out on the excitement of the start as MDL will be live streaming to the jumbotron in the Race Village, capturing the yachts as they depart Ocean Village Marina, start to sound of the cannon and race the first few miles towards the Needles.

For more information on the Ocean Globe Race, or to register for free tickets to the Race Village visit <https://www.mdlmarinas.co.uk/ogr23/>

For more information on MDL and its marinas visit www.mdlmarinas.co.uk

Ends

Notes for editors:

MDL Marinas Group Ltd

- MDL Marinas Group is the UK's leading marina and water-based leisure provider and one of Europe's largest marina groups, offering members over 160 destinations to cruise to in the UK, France and Spain. Currently MDL Marinas manages 18 UK marinas and one in Spain.
- Bringing ocean racing back to Southampton, MDL is hosting the Ocean Globe Race at its Ocean Village Marina in the heart of the city – as it did previously for so many editions of the Whitbread Round the World Race.
- MDL Marinas is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year, with Ocean Village Marina added to its portfolio in 1989 - one year before Tracy Edwards triumphantly brought home the all-female Whitebread Race crew of Maiden to Ocean Village Marina.
- MDL Marinas Group is proud to be landlords to over 500 marine businesses, with over 260 staff delivering the unique MDL experience to all berth holders, visitors and commercial partners.
- For more information visit www.mdlmarinas.co.uk

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